



Name _____ ANSWER KEY

Date _____ Class _____



BACKGROUND: First Provincial Congress



Surry County Committee of Safety Journal, 1775, SR.12.13.3.001, State Archives of N.C.

Great Britain's Tea Act of 1773 left the colonists paying a tax that they did not have a chance to vote for or against. After sending letters and petitions to the British government for years protesting taxes with little success, a group of Boston men took more direct action on December 16, 1773, by throwing tea into the harbor, an act that became known as the Boston Tea Party.

British Parliament responded by passing the Intolerable Acts to punish the Americans and end what they saw as rebellion. Provisions included closing the port of Boston until residents paid for the destroyed tea and revoking the colony's 1691 charter, taking away many local rights. A new Quartering Act, which could force communities to board British soldiers, took effect in all the colonies.

Anger spread as people felt a new unity with the citizens of Boston. In North Carolina, William Hooper (a native of Boston) called for a meeting to discuss

these issues. The three-day meeting in New Bern, beginning August 25, 1774, became known as the First Provincial Congress. 71 men from across North Carolina gathered to discuss Parliament's actions and passed a set of resolutions in protest. Even as the delegates pledged their allegiance to King George, they promised to boycott products that came from Great Britain, such as tea and fine fabrics.

The delegates to the Provincial Congress also wanted the colonies to unite in support of Massachusetts and the boycott. Although they did not yet call for independence, delegates took steps toward a new government. Committees of Safety formed in counties to establish local government and send representatives to the Provincial Congress. The Provincial Congress then elected representatives to attend the first Continental Congress in Philadelphia, which would include others from twelve colonies. William Hooper, Richard Caswell, and Joseph Hewes were North Carolina's representatives.

In October 1774, 51 Edenton women sent their own resolves in support of the Provincial Congress' resolves to the King of England and also published them in London and local newspapers.



Edenton Resolves, "Postscript," *Williamsburg Virginia Gazette*, November 3, 1774.

Quick Fact Check

1. Why were some colonists angry at British Parliament?

Possible answers include taxation without representation, Tea Act, Intolerable Acts, Quartering Act, punishments for Boston.

2. How did some women support the Provincial Congress' resolves?

By pledging to boycott imported goods; by publishing a signed pledge to support.

3. What was the difference between the Provincial Congress and the Continental Congress?

Provincial congress was a gathering of representatives from N.C. counties and towns to govern the new state. Continental Congress was representatives from 13 new states gathering to govern the new nation.

4. To whom did delegates to the First Provincial Congress pledge their allegiance?

King George.